Inclusion Scenario

Sharon Arkell, an experienced special education teacher, finds herself assigned to co-teach with another experienced teacher who refuses to relinquish any control in the classroom.

Sharon Arkell, an experienced special education teacher, finds herself assigned to co-teach with another experienced teacher who refuses to relinquish any control in the classroom. The only suggestion offered to Sharon is "Be patient and don't rock the boat".   
Sharon Arkell, a special educator, had been teaching in the same community of about 35,000 residents for 12 years. This year, her school district adopted a pro-inclusion policy and provided a two-day workshop for all teachers on inclusion and the collaborative teaching model. After completing the workshop, Sharon's first assignment was to work with Betty, a fifth-grade teacher at her school. Betty had been teaching for 15 years and had received several teaching awards. She ran a very structured classroom and had high expectations for her students. She was known to wear a notebook around her neck the first three weeks of school, writing down kids' names at the first infraction, so she could remember who needed to stay in from recess.   
A former Title I teacher, Betty was used to having paraprofessionals in her classroom and was happy to have the extra help for students with special needs. By the end of the first week, Sharon had the impression that Betty viewed her in a similar light. Sharon felt that Betty expected her to be quiet and do what she was told. For instance, when Sharon spoke, she felt that Betty cut her off or found some reason to contradict her.   
Sharon decided to talk to Betty about how she felt and asked to meet with her at the end of the day. "I wanted to talk to you about my role in the classroom," Sharon said. Betty was silent. "I have been feeling that my presence in the classroom is an annoyance to you, and I am concerned because I feel responsible for meeting the needs of the special education students within this classroom," Sharon continued.   
Betty informed Sharon, in no uncertain terms, that this was her classroom. "It is fine with me that you look over the shoulders of your three students and help them keep up, but nothing else is your responsibility. It is important that the students know who the teacher is and having two adults doing the instructing will only confuse them."   
"Well, I thought I was supposed to be co-teaching with you," Sharon replied.   
Betty answered, "Well, for now I think it is best if I handle all of the instruction."  In the weeks that followed, Sharon tried several times to talk to Betty about her discomfort with the situation. She brought in articles about inclusion and co-teaching in an attempt to enlighten Betty. When Sharon asked if she had read any of the articles, Betty responded, "I'm not sure I can handle this new approach to teaching."   
Sharon took hope in those words "not sure." She went home thinking that the ambiguity contained in those words left some room for accepting the pro-inclusion/pro-collaborative teaching model. Her hopes were dashed, however, when Betty swept into the classroom the next morning saying, "I wrote this letter last night and I'm going to read it to you right now." Betty proceeded to read the letter aloud to Sharon. It included several reasons why Sharon should not be in her classroom. Betty argued that she was solely responsible for the education of her students and needed to be in control for their sake. She had a lot of content to cover and would be held accountable for the students' mastery of that content. She also felt that Sharon's presence only interfered with the efficient running of her class.   
"Well, Betty, perhaps I could just work with the students out in the hall to give them some more individualized attention."   
Betty responded, "You don't want them to feel different or separate from the rest of their classmates. That may embarrass them."   
Sharon asked directly, "Is there any possibility of changing how things are being done?"   
Betty replied point-blank, "No, it will only confuse the students."   
"But, Betty, they are already confused. They are not "catching on" to what you are teaching. They have trouble following your lecture format and completing all of the worksheets you use. I think we need to modify the instructional approach for them. I just found an article that discusses ways to meet individual students' needs by adapting things in the classroom. Cooperative learning activities, for example, are designed as activities that the whole class can take part in, but in small groups individual students' needs can be met and students can use each others' strengths for the group to be successful. I will bring it in," Sharon argued.   
"My teaching methods have been successful for 15 years. I don't think that is what needs to change," Betty answered.   
Sharon was exasperated and decided to share her view of the situation with the principal, Mary Allen. "I have been working with Betty since the beginning of the school year, and I feel she is not allowing me to do my job. She will not consider any of my suggestions for adapting curriculum to better meet the needs of my students and second guesses any action I take."   
"Yes, I know Ms. Criner can be very controlling," Mrs. Allen responded in a soothing voice. "But, because this is your first year of collaborative teaching, why don't you just go along with her the best that you can. Maybe once you establish a relationship with her, she'll relinquish some of her authority. She is an excellent teacher and her students always have high test scores. Don't rock the boat and see what happens."   
As Sharon walked out the door she thought, "I don't know how long it will take to establish a relationship with Betty. I don't even know if it is possible. What about the kids until then? Their needs aren't being met.   
Sharon is clearly struggling with the teaching arrangement that has been thrust upon her.  In spite of her efforts to employ one component of Action Research (AR) (literature on the benefits of collaborative instruction), Betty seems very determined not to change.  Are there other aspects of AR that might be useful in this situation?  What might they be and how could they be used?  And, by whom?

Children with Exceptional Needs Communication Role Plays and Strategies

Scenario #1

Person #1: You are a middle school (general education) English teacher who works hard at inspiring and encouraging your students. This year Sam, a new student to the school has joined your class and is having a difficult time adjusting. He seems distant most of the time and frequently falls asleep during your lessons. He also fails to turn in assignments and simply “brushes you off” when you approach him about his missing work. However, when Sam actually participates you find that he has a hard time reading and understanding the texts which leads to further frustration and withdraw from the class. After several unanswered phone messages you finally get a hold of Sam’s parent and schedule a meeting as soon as possible to discuss your concerns. The morning of the meeting has arrived and before school starts Sam’s parent walks into the classroom…

Person 2: You have recently moved yourself and your two children to a new city and took a job at the local factory working the graveyard shift. You are often away at work when your son Sam and his sister come home from school, but you always try to be available to them in the mornings before they leave. You believe that Sam is a mature, intelligent, and capable individual and you often rely on him to take care of his little sister and the household chores at night. However, lately you’ve been receiving several messages from Sam’s teacher insisting that the two of you meet and discuss some concerns that the teacher has about Sam. You can’t believe that Sam would be having any problems at school since he does such as good job at home. You finally return the teacher’s phone calls when you have a chance and agree to meet. The morning of the meeting arrives and you walk into the classroom…

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Scenario #2

Person 1: You are a high school (general education) math teacher who is feeling extremely overwhelmed by your large class sizes and increased class loads. Over all, you feel that you do your best in returning parent phone calls and provide your students with enough feedback on their work. Recently, a student with special needs has joined one of your classes. You have read the student’s IEP, took part in the IEP meeting, and have complied with the accommodations presented in the IEP. However, this student’s parents have been contacting you and complaining that they feel “out of the loop” with what their child is learning. They also dislike the fact that they have to wait until midterm and final grades to come out in order to see how their child is doing in your class. They have scheduled to meet with you tomorrow afternoon and the next day the parents walk into your classroom…

(How have you decided to keep them updated on their child’s progress?)

Person #2: Your daughter Cathy has recently been diagnosed with a learning disability. You know your rights and have gone through all the necessary procedures to make sure that Cathy’s educational needs are met. All of Cathy’s teachers have been great about meeting her needs and following the IEP, but the math teacher does a lousy job keeping you informed about her progress. You don’t even know what she’s learning or doing in that classroom. You’ve had enough and decided to set up a meeting with Cathy’s math teacher. The next day you and your spouse walk into the classroom…

~The three of you have all come together in order to construct a long-range plan for teaching Julie, a student who has a mild form of autism. Two of you are general education teachers (science & business) who both have Julie in their classes and one of you is the school’s special education teacher. How will you all decide on meeting Julie’s educational needs? What kinds of interventions will be implemented and what procedures will be included? Who will be responsible for these interventions? How will this plan be monitored and evaluated? Remember time is of the essence! You’ve all rearranged your schedules today in order to have the same planning period.

(Remember to look at the peer collaboration model in chapter 2.)

Scenarios Inclusion

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Three teachers with three real scenarios show the reality of [special education inclusion](http://www.brighthub.com/article/Special-Education-Inclusion-and-LRE-Least-Restrictive-Environment-As-Defi/Barbara/535.html) in school communities. Regular education teachers remain unequipped professionally to effectively handle the inclusion of students with disabilities in classrooms and this is a reality that must be changed and can be changed with IDEA implementation.

The following scenarios depict the reality of special education in today’s classrooms.

**Scenario 1:**

Mr. Hanson has seven students with [IEPs (Individualized Education Programs)](http://www.brighthub.com/article/The-Whole-School-Approach-to-Inclusion-IEPs-Individualized-Education-Pro/Barbara/537.html) in her fifth grade classroom. One of the students has a speech disorder and receives biweekly speech therapy with Mr. Jones, the speech pathologist. Two students have undiagnosed ADD (Attention Deficiency Disorder) and diagnosed behavioral off task behaviors. Five students have special needs that include learning skills deficiencies and not being at grade level in reading and math.

**Scenario 2:**

Mrs. Williams is a ninth grade general science teacher in a public high school of 2000 students. With a class of 35 students for five periods each day, Mrs. Williams has an average of 10 students in three of her science classes. Behavior and off task engagements have become a routine disruption for the majority of students with special needs in her classes. In one of her classes, she has two students with autism who attend with an Instructional Assistant, who sits with them during each class.

[Cyber Charter School](http://googleads.g.doubleclick.net/aclk?sa=l&ai=Bv2qto45CTovpKdO_6AaizoD-Cfrun-IByrDj7Rqqs5viDrCL8QEQARgBIPKZ9AE4AFCJk5zI_v____8BYMmOq4zQpIgSoAHKyqz5A7IBEXd3dy5icmlnaHRodWIuY29tyAEB2gE8aHR0cDovL3d3dy5icmlnaHRodWIuY29tL2VkdWNhdGlvbi9zcGVjaWFsL2FydGljbGVzLzg3OC5hc3B4gAIByALqy-0XqAMB6APeCOgDgQXoA7wF6ANK9QMCAADE&num=1&sig=AOD64_3gCErpU1U-yFD_1PxcFYXpB-Sd5g&client=ca-pub-1894578950532504&adurl=http://www.palcs.org/landingpage_one.html%3F_kk%3Donline%2520schools%2520for%2520education%26_kt%3D5c4bf3da-f76b-4a38-ade5-a7b81f469ce9)

[www.PALCS.org](http://googleads.g.doubleclick.net/aclk?sa=l&ai=Bv2qto45CTovpKdO_6AaizoD-Cfrun-IByrDj7Rqqs5viDrCL8QEQARgBIPKZ9AE4AFCJk5zI_v____8BYMmOq4zQpIgSoAHKyqz5A7IBEXd3dy5icmlnaHRodWIuY29tyAEB2gE8aHR0cDovL3d3dy5icmlnaHRodWIuY29tL2VkdWNhdGlvbi9zcGVjaWFsL2FydGljbGVzLzg3OC5hc3B4gAIByALqy-0XqAMB6APeCOgDgQXoA7wF6ANK9QMCAADE&num=1&sig=AOD64_3gCErpU1U-yFD_1PxcFYXpB-Sd5g&client=ca-pub-1894578950532504&adurl=http://www.palcs.org/landingpage_one.html%3F_kk%3Donline%2520schools%2520for%2520education%26_kt%3D5c4bf3da-f76b-4a38-ade5-a7b81f469ce9)

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**Scenario 3:**

Mr. Hamilton teaches 5 PE (Physical Education) classes with over 40+ students in each class. His challenge class is the weightlifting class with 42 students and three students from the self contained EBD (Emotionally Behavioral Deficiency) class where students are only allowed to attend one PE class which happens to be the weightlifting class. All three students are prone to violent outbursts and threats to the teacher and other students. One was suspended for 45 days and sent to an alternative school program for punching another student in the face because he looked at him funny.

**IDEA Inclusions**

The new education mandates of NCLB (No Child Left Behind) and AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) along with amendments to the [IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)](http://www.brighthub.com/article/IDEA-Individuals-with-Disabilities-Education-Act-Special-Education-Prog/Barbara/533.html) have presented a real challenge to educating students with special needs in mainstream classrooms. In schools with limited federal and district funding, the challenge is real and definitively [impacts](http://www.brighthub.com/education/special/articles/878.aspx) educational access for special education students.

**Scenario 1:**

The impact on teachers in classrooms is measured in increased discipline referrals and academic disconnect between students and teachers. The reality for Mr. Hanson is that he needs to have professional [support](http://www.brighthub.com/education/special/articles/878.aspx) from the special education teachers in order to create behavioral contracts and interventions for the students with off task behaviors. The learning skills in reading and math for the other five students should have data documentation provided by each student’s special education advisor. Mr. Hanson can use the assessments to create reading and math lessons to address the deficiencies and provided measurable steps of academic success for each student.

**Scenario 2:**

For Mrs. Williams, the approach needs to be proactive and specific in the form of a classroom management plan that addresses any off task behavior in the classroom. By simply posting 3-5 classroom rules and consequences, Mrs. Williams can start the process of addressing behavior from a holistic whole classroom inclusion approach.

**Scenario 3:**

Mr. Hamilton needs administrative intervention in his PE class due to the possibility for injury given that a student has already been injured and the class has an overload of students. Placing an Instructional Assistant in the classroom will provide additional adult supervision for the three students and other students who may experience an occasional off task behavior in a weightlifting class with 42 students.

**Conclusion:**

The reality is that regular education teachers are unprepared to handle the increasing mainstream of students unequipped to handle the academic and emotional expectations of a regular education classroom. The message is clear for school communities seeking legal and federal compliance. With inclusion of special education students in mainstream classroom, teachers must have access to professional development and additional teacher support to provide a quality education for society’s most vulnerable students.

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Read more: <http://www.brighthub.com/education/special/articles/878.aspx#ixzz1UdOwqGMi>

**BACK TO SQUARE ONE**

TOPICS

Accommodations: inclusion

Behavior: behavior management plan, behavior management strategies

SCENARIO

*Rachel and Leanne were expecting another great year co-teaching a combined 3rd, 4th, and*

*5th grade class with equal numbers of general education and exceptional education students. Many*

*students were returning from last year including Thomas, a 4th grader with learning disabilities and*

*ADHD. When Thomas’ mother developed significant health problems, his behavior regressed and the*

*whole class suffered.*

Rachel Moore and Leanne Reynolds were looking forward to beginning their second year coteaching

at Hidden Stream Elementary School. Both were experienced teachers. Rachel had taught

3rd grade at Hidden Stream for five years and Leanne, new to Hidden Stream last year, was certified

in behavior disorders with six years of experience as a resource teacher for students with learning

disabilities. Rachel and Leanne shared a combined 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade class of 28 children with

equal numbers of general education and exceptional education students.

Last year, the two teachers successfully implemented a class behavior plan that

accommodated all of their students, including those who had difficulty with self-control (see

appendix). Their plan consisted of a five-step system that was represented by five different colored

cards for each child, displayed on a wall chart. Children began the day with a blue card signifying

good behavior. If a rule was broken, offenders would get a verbal warning and their card would be

changed to yellow. If they continued to be off task, they would be asked to go to a safe space (an

isolated desk) where they were given a chance to refocus and continue their work. At this time their

card would be changed to orange. Another infraction changed their card to purple and they were

sent to the Think-Tank, which was a designated area of the classroom. Before they could return to

their seat, students were required to write down the rules they had broken, better behavior choices,

and how their behavior had impacted the class and themselves. This log was signed by the teacher

and student, and at the end of the day, it was sent home for parental signature. Continued acting out

or being off task resulted in a red card and a phone call to parents. As a last resort, if the behavior

persisted, students were sent to the office with an official behavior referral, which the principal

handled. It was rare for most students in the class to get beyond the purple stage.

Leanne and Rachel modified the class behavior plan occasionally for individuals with special

behavioral needs. When necessary, they used a “Choices Chart” designed to monitor good choices,

such as going to the safe space without a fuss, and bad choices, such as disrupting the class while

in the Think Tank. The teachers also talked with the student after each consequence to encourage

appropriate choices. Students needing further modifications were given extra incentives, such as

having lunch with the teachers, based on the number of positive choices they made during the day.

**CASE BASED**

**ESTIMATED TIME: 1 HOUR**

2

They were also given an extra warning at each step in the behavior plan.

Thomas, a 4th grader identified as having learning disabilities and attention deficit

hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), was returning for his second year in the class. His pediatrician had

prescribed Ritalin last year to improve Thomas’ ability to focus in the classroom. Both teachers

believed that the medication had helped. A year ago, Thomas had entered the class two grade

levels behind academically and displayed a number of disruptive behaviors such as loud angry

outbursts, chair kicking, pushing, hitting other students, running from the classroom, hiding, and

noncompliance. Even with the behavior plan modifications, he often reached the red card (call home

step) and occasionally office referrals were necessary. Rachel and Leanne implemented the Choices

Chart with Thomas in an effort to engage him in thinking about and monitoring his own behavior.

The sheet went home with Thomas every afternoon so his parents could also monitor his progress.

By the end of the year, many of his disruptive behaviors were under control and he was being

weaned from the chart. He also had advanced one and one half grade levels academically.

Although both parents were involved in supporting the behavioral consequences, their

approach to discipline differed. His mom, Angela, took a more nurturing approach whereas his dad,

Chuck, was a strict disciplinarian. Thomas’ younger brother, Timmy, a second grader, was already

ahead of Thomas academically. Chuck felt that if he rewarded Thomas for what he considered to be

poor behavior or effort at school, it would give Timmy the idea that he didn’t need to work very hard

either. Angela tried to work with each boy individually, rewarding the achievements of both relative

to their abilities.

As the new school year started, Rachel and Leanne were hopeful that Thomas would

continue to make progress and that his old behavior chart would no longer be needed. By the end

of the first week, however, they were shocked to find that Thomas’ behavior had regressed to the

point that he was talking baby talk and sucking his thumb. He was also more defiant, yelling at his

teachers when he disagreed with a class activity or direction. He quickly progressed through the

steps of the behavior plan to the red stage. Rachel and Leanne decided it was time to call Thomas’

mother.

Although Angela was concerned and had noticed the babyish behavior at home, she was

recovering from surgery. Thomas’ father had been handling the day-to-day household tasks as well

as managing the boys. Angela attributed many of Thomas’ problems to her husband’s different

style of discipline. Thomas was dealing with more negative consequences than usual because his

dad was not as patient with him. “I’m really sorry that he’s acting like this,” Thomas’ mother said

apologetically, “we’ll definitely talk to him but, honestly, Thomas’ behavior is not our biggest

problem right now. I know how difficult he can be, but, please try to bear with us until I’m feeling

better.”

As Rachel and Leanne reviewed the conversation, they agreed that much of Thomas’ acting

out was due to the upheavals caused by his mother’s surgery. Perhaps, if they could just carry the

load for a while, things would get better as his mom’s health improved.

Unfortunately, things went from bad to worse. Thomas made loud animal noises during a

lesson, kicked a chair, and belligerently yelled at Leanne when she directed him to his safe space.

Both teachers decided to bring out the Choices Chart they had used the previous year. Back to square

one, Leanne thought as she discussed the change of plans with Thomas.